

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Rep. Charlie Melancon announced today that St. James Parish has been awarded a \$150,000 federal grant to improve the capacity of the parish's wastewater treatment facilities to accommodate a growing population and economy. The grant was awarded through the Delta Regional Authority, a federal agency created by Congress in 2000 to work with Louisiana and seven other states to enhance economic development and improve the quality of life for the residents of the Mississippi River delta region. June 8, 2007
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"St. James's growing economy is bringing more jobs and people to the parish every day, and we must support this surge by improving our public infrastructure," said Rep. Melancon.

"I am pleased the parish, the federal government, and Zapp's were able to work together on this project so the community can continue to grow. Cooperation like this will keep good jobs in south Louisiana and allow our citizens to work and raise their families in the communities they grew up in."

St. James Parish is providing \$30,000 in matching funding for the new treatment facility, which will provide wastewater services to nearby businesses including the Parish Welcome Center (a tourist center) and Zapp's Potato Chips. For its part, Zapp's has donated to St. James Parish the 20 acre parcel of land, valued at \$200,000, where the new facility will be built. The Parish will operate and maintain the wastewater treatment facility once it is built.

The new facility is necessary because the Town of Gramercy has reached its wastewater treatment capacity and can no longer handle the waste stream produced by the Zapp's factory, which has grown in size over the years. The Parish estimates that this public infrastructure improvement project will allow Zapp's to retain 105 jobs at their factory.

The Delta Regional Authority is a federal agency that works to improve life for the residents of 240 counties and parishes in parts of eight states (Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri and Tennessee). Led by a federal co-chairman appointed by

the president and the governors of the eight states, the DRA fosters partnerships throughout the region as it attempts to improve the Delta economy. DRA funds can be used to leverage other federal and state programs.

In the first five years, the Delta Regional Authority's federal grant program funded 334 projects while using \$48.5 million of authority funds. That \$48.5 million leveraged \$213 million of other federal funds and \$493.4 million of private funds. The investment of more than \$750 million in the region helped create or retain almost 31,000 jobs while providing drinking water and sewer services to more than 24,000 families. Meanwhile, about 6,000 Delta residents received job training due to this investment. For more information about the DRA, visit <http://www.dra.gov/>.

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